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ST. MARIA TERESA AND ST. JOHN OF  
THE CROSS, CARMELITES. PART I

By John E. Fetzer

The historical origin of the Carmelites must be placed at the middle of the 12th century, when a crusader from Calabria, named Berthod, and ten companions established themselves as hermits near the cave of Elias on Mount Carmel. About 1210 the hermits on Carmel received from Albert, Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, a rule comprising sixteen articles. This was the primitive Carmelite Code.

The life prescribed was strict. The monks were to live in separate cells or huts, devoted to prayer and work; they met only in the oratory for services, and were to live a life of great silence, seclusion, abstinence and austerity. This rule received papal approbation in 1226.

Soon, however, the losses of the Christian arms in Palestine made Carmel an unsafe place of residence for western hermits, and so, in 1240, they migrated first to Cyprus and thence to Sicily, France and England. In 1247, the code was altered to the conditions of the western lands to which it had been transplanted. The Carmelites became one of the four great orders of Mendicant Friars, known as the "White Friars" from the white mantle worn over the dark brown habit.

This change was made and under this form the Carmelites spread all over western Europe and became exceedingly popular, as an order closely analogous to the Dominicans and Franciscans. In the course of time, further relaxations of the rule were introduced which caused still further relaxations, but many houses clung to the earlier rule; thus arose among the Carmelites the same division into "observants" and "conventuals" that wrought such mischief among the Franciscans.



Of all movements in the Carmelite order by far the most important and far-reaching in its results has been the reform initiated by St. Maria Teresa. After nearly thirty years passed in a Carmelite convent in Avila under relaxed rules, she founded in the same city a small convent wherein a rule stricter than that of 1247 was to be observed. This was in 1562. In spite of opposition and difficulties of all kinds, she succeeded in establishing a number, not only of nunneries, but (with the cooperation of St. John of the Cross) also of friaries of the strict observance.

The idea of the reform was to restore and emphasize the austerity and the purely contemplative and meditative character of primitive Carmelite life. From the fact that those of the reform wore sandals in place of shoes and stockings, they have come to be called the Discalced, or bare-footed, Carmelites, in distinction to the Calced or older branch of the order. In 1580 the reformed monasteries were made a separate province under the general of the order, and in 1593 this province was made by papal act an independent order with its own general and government, so that there were now two distinct orders of Carmelites.

The Discalced Carmelites spread rapidly all over Catholic Europe, and then to Spanish America and the East, especially India and Persia, in which lands they have carried on to this day extensive missionary undertakings. Both observances suffered severely from the various revolutions, but they both still exist, the Discalced being by far the most numerous and thriving. There are in all some 2,000 Carmelite friars, and the nuns are much more numerous.



St. Theresa (1515-1582), or Teresa de Cepeda, Spanish nun, was born at Avila, in Old Castile, on March 28, 1515, and was educated in an Augustinian convent in the town. She was born of a good family and was a lively child and a joy to her parents. She had three sisters, but no brothers. Her early training in the church was very strict and she was a dutiful young person. Her first vision inside de San Vicent came as a child. She was puzzled and for a time talked to no one about it. She attended mass regularly and finally told her parish priest about the vision. After some consolation she became perfectly happy and was devoted in her religious life for her vision had shown her that she was one with the universe and all of creation. The priest did not understand her and thought it very strange because her belief was at variance with that which the church had established throughout the ages of time. The fact is, she was ahead of her time and in her view was experiencing a true message of Jesus Christ.

At the age of eighteen she entered the Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation. Even so she led a lively social life which she maintained with the leading families of the area. In 1554, when she was nearly forty, the second part of her life began.

The death of her father roused her to serious reflection, and one day, as she entered the oratory, she was struck by the image of the wounded Christ, placed there for an approaching festival. She fell in tears at the feet of the figure, and felt every worldly emotion die within her. The shock threw her into a trance, and these trances, accompanied by visions, recurred frequently in the subsequent part of her life. The visions grew more and more vivid, and in a moment of divine inspiration she saw through to the reality of God.

The cross of her rosary was snatched from her hand one day, and when returned it was made of jewels more brilliant than diamonds, visible, however, to



her alone. She had often an acute pain in her side, and fancied that an angel came to her with a lance tipped with fire, which he struck into her heart. August 27 is kept sacred in Spain to this mystery.

#### Foundation of the Descalzos

Teresa was determined to found a house in which all the original rules of the Carmelite order would be observed. In spite of great opposition from the authorities of the order, and in particular from the prioress and sisters of the Incarnation, she persevered with her scheme and secured papal approval. On August 24, 1562, mass was said in the little chapel of the house prepared for her at Avila and the new order constituted.

It was to be an order of Descalzos or Barefoots, in opposition to the relaxed parent body, the Calzados. The sisters were to wear sandals of rope; they were to sleep on straw, eat no meat, to be strictly confined to the cloister, and to live on alms without regular endowment. Teresa encountered grave opposition, but after six months a fresh bull arrived from Pius V., and the provincial of her order now gave her leave to remove and take charge of her sisterhood. The number of thirteen, to which on grounds of discipline she had limited the foundation, was soon filled up, and Teresa spent here her five happiest years as her visions continued. The general of the order came to Avila and gave her powers to found additional houses of Descalzos for both men and women. Convents were founded (with the help of a young priest and a sister in the church) at Medina, Malaga, Valladolid, Toledo, Segovia and Salamanca, and two at Alva.

She went to Seville to found a house, thus overstepping for the first time the boundaries of the Castiles, to which her authorization limited her. The latent hostility of the old order was aroused; the general ordered the immediate suppression of the house at Seville, and procured a bull from Gregory XIII prohibiting the same in all other houses.



When she was fifty-two, in the year 1567, she met in Medina del Campo a young priest, who was to become St. John of the Cross, with whom her spiritual life would henceforth be linked; thus forming one of the gentlest episodes of Spanish history.

### St. John of the Cross

St. John of the Cross (1542-1591), Spanish mystic, was born at Varena near Ontiveros (Old Castile) five miles west of Avila on June 24, 1542. He became a professed Carmelite in 1564, and was ordained priest at Salamanca in 1567.

His real name was Juan de Yepes y Alvarez; in religion he was known as Juan de San Matias until 1568, when he adopted the name of Juan de la Cruz. Juan de Yepes y Alvarez, twenty-seven years younger than Teresa, was the son of very poor parents. He came from a family of ten, five sisters, three brothers and one death in infancy. His father died after a long illness when Juan was only nine years old and his widowed mother, Maria, took her brood to Avila, where she had a very difficult time. She made clothes for the rich. Juan worked for a merchant doing odd jobs. It was a trying experience for the youngster as he detested the work and his boss. The family was broken up, the sisters stayed in Avila and Juan and his brothers went to Alba de Tormes to live with an uncle. Juan was twelve years old and due to the ill treatment of the uncle, he and his brothers left. Juan had tried to make the best of his situation in Alba devoutly going to mass every morning, but he elected to go.

Juan then went to Arevalo and then to Medina, where the inquisitive Juan served as a male nurse in a paupers' hospital. His close contact with misery bred several results: he had resented the family responsibility after his father's death which he later regretted and he sought what he believed was the truth and took vows as a Carmelite. He entertained those first mystical visions which were to characterize his life. Like other great Spaniards he



attended the University of Salamanca, where at the age of twenty-five he was ordained a priest.

After three years of service in Avila teaching young boys as his first assignment, Juan went to Medina to attend a meeting and met for the first time Teresa de Avila, whose fame filled the countryside. Juan was drawn to Maria, but little did he know that she likewise was experiencing similar feelings. Subsequently, Maria went to the next village to see the priest there and unexpectedly saw Juan again. She was very cautious about the visit to the priest. She went to the chapel first, as was always her pattern. The chapel was very quiet. This was where the meeting with Juan took place. Later she went to the chapel a second time and saw him. At this time she became aware of strange feelings she had never experienced before. Feeling for a man! She was just now 52 years old and had been solely taken with only spiritual feelings before. She was very unsure of herself and she didn't know what to do. This was to change her life.

Judging from the externals no one could have predicted that this fashionable, witty nun from a fine family would find in Juan de Yepis, a retiring young priest from an under-privileged family, a bond of identity; but that is what happened. The English religious expert, F. Trueman Dicken, calls their friendship "one of the most fecund of all Christian relationships since the time of the Apostles."

For a time she sought to put the matter to rest. Her strict code as a Discalced Carmelite instinctively told her to put Juan aside and get on with her mission. She seemed to have succeeded.

However, subsequently, after serving elsewhere, Juan was reassigned to the convent of Santa Teresa in Avila by the church hierarchy where he was to remain for five years. Teresa was not there at the time. Juan was assigned his duties as confessor, which naturally placed him in circulation about the convent. From time to time after the return of Teresa two years later Juan would see her from afar across the garden.

This went on for many months, finally Juan spoke first. They talked for a



long time and Teresa left. She wasn't sure what to do, since her old feelings returned, she went to the chapel to pray. She even went to Santo Domingo, a lovely garden which in the spring was Teresa's outdoor chapel. In the convent, Santa Teresa had a private patio garden where she went morning and nighttime for a few minutes to pray. It was very peaceful there; she wasn't disturbed.

She next talked to her girlhood friend, Anna Teresa, who as a young girl came from her home in Seville to Avila, where she lived with Maria Teresa. No conclusion was reached. However, Maria Teresa was happy through it all and felt highly exhilarated. She felt this would pass in time as it did before.

In the meantime, Maria Teresa, Anna Teresa, and another nun went to Arevalo. They left Avila in the morning before sunrise, taking a road which went from Adanero. The way to Arevalo was not as it is today. They had to go over many hills and mountains. There were no roads. They got there in three months. Few have walked so far. At Arevalo they stayed inside the church until the convent was built. The convent was built in a relatively short time and housed 36 nuns. A parishioner by the name of Andres Mateas went to the convent with food and clothes for the sisters. He was always most kind and wanted to share what he had. They were there over a year. Then they went back to Avila. They did not mind the journey that much; they always went where they were called as they felt this was their duty.

#### They Continue to Meet

In the meantime Juan continued to be enraptured with Teresa, but being a man of the church he tried to force her out of his mind. He went to the chapel as much as possible to do his prayers. This didn't work because she was there too. Finally the two could not fight their impulses any longer. They met in the chapel on numerous occasions where they conducted long discussions which deepened the spiritual life of each. It was this period of shared ideas that led to the richest



experiences of their lives. A mutual understanding developed.

Why did these two lives find compatibility? Maria was restless to an extreme. She constantly searched for fresh ideas and new horizons. Her urge to develop her spiritual gifts made it difficult for her to settle down in conventional or routine activities. These characteristics made it counter productive in developing a large number of intimate friends but by the same token, she developed a small circle of very close friends who stayed with her spiritually throughout her life. She made a determined effort to achieve success and demonstrated the powers of an outstanding decision maker. She respected people most when they were frank and forthright, but accepted advice only from those whom she admired and respected.

While she was independent she was superb in handling people and her leadership was courageous and attracted myriads of followers. Beneath her busy exterior she was romantic to the fullest with those who could understand that her affection could very quickly swing like a pendulum to an opposite ambiguity. She succeeded in reconciling her need for love with her need for solitude and cultivated those who could interpret her subtle signs of affection. It was this latter characteristic that led her to Juan because he understood.

On the other hand, Juan, who was to become St. John of the Cross, was kindly, generous and peace loving. His innate goodness always shined through. Even though some considered it a sign of weakness his optimistic kindness for people left a long imprint in his path. His penchant for charity exceeded his devotion to peace. His respect and cooperation was always noted by his colleagues who felt that his dedication and industrious application to forward the work of God was without a doubt a mark of distinction.

#### An Affair of the Heart

Thus the relationship of Maria Teresa and Juan was an affair of the heart



coupled with deep spiritual feelings and sacred love, not only for each other but humanity as well. (It should be stated, therefore, that the interpretations of this story should be most carefully construed in the light of the times in which it happened.)

As a result of the long interchange between the two, they were among the first to revert to the ancient understanding that all life and material things of the universe were one with an overruling creative intelligence and that one could only find God within, for therein lies Heaven. Maria in Her "Interior Castle" put it this way:

..."But I began to think of the soul as a castle made of diamond or very clear crystal in which there are many rooms, just as in heaven there are many mansions...For if we consider the matter, the soul of the righteous is but a paradise in which, as God tells us, He takes delight....Let us then consider the many mansions of this castle, some up high, others lower down, still others along the sides, and in the very center of all the principal one, where takes place the most secret intercourse between God and the soul."

"It is obvious that to an organized Church the mysticism expressed in the above quotation from Teresa poses a threat, for it runs the risk of degenerating into the Quaker heresy of 'each man his own priest,' because if by the mystical process one can attain direct contact with God, the intercession of Church and prelate is no longer essential, although it may for social reasons continue to be convenient. It was this potentiality in the preaching of Teresa and Juan that kept them hovering between sainthood and heresy, and much of the opposition they encountered during their working lives originated in an honest fear on the part of the Church that they were encouraging in others, if not practicing themselves, a separatism which must end in apostasy," so aptly reported by James A. Michener.



### To Segovia

It becomes obvious that Maria and Juan more and more were to become controversial not only for their radical departure from long, established doctrines of the Church but sooner or later civil authorities would become equally antagonistic because there was little distinction between the Church and State. This common bond between them was to develop their affection for each other as Juan became the bold champion of Maria and she in turn called Juan "my little Seneca." (Annaeus Seneca, the elder, born in Corduba, was a rhetorician, poet and author. This famous Spaniard was father of Annaeus Lucius Seneca (4 B.C. - A.D. 65), who became more famous than his father having tutored Domitius, who as Nero became emperor of Rome.)

To Maria, the adverse was too much. She turned to Juan with the full component of love and spirit which was mutually exchanged. The truth of the matter is that they were very much in love notwithstanding the Church.

### The Cathedral

In Segovia stands the great cathedral built early in the 16th century, elegant then as it still is today. Maria and Juan decided that they would continue the work of the Discalced Carmelites. They went to Segovia where they were to stay seven years and established a convent well secluded within the confines of the cathedral. They had the help of the Alvarez family who lived nearby in the beautiful Alvarez castle. In the work Maria Teresa and Juan saw each other every day, usually not spending less than an hour together.

Anna Teresa came to the convent to help. As a life-long friend of Maria, she became equally devoted to Juan.

### The Confession

As was to be expected, the association of Maria and Juan became the subject



of much conversation in the Church, particularly among the laity. Church officials were equally disturbed and the matter became of much concern to both Maria and Juan. At that time Father Nunez Martinez was the confessor at the Cathedral. Maria Teresa went to Father Nunez to tell the whole truth about her feelings toward Juan and the visions she was having. The Father was shaken by the details related by Maria. He believed her story after initially entertaining considerable doubt in an unjustified attitude. She was so sincere in what she had to say that he realized that he had been narrow-minded at this unusual relationship. He could not offer any worthwhile advice and therefore suggested no punishment, as he regretted his initial attitude.

#### Nunez and Anna

The Father continued as the confessor to Maria and Juan until the time of their death. He could only say they were "lovely souls" and that they were the most devoted and enthusiastic "couple" he had ever known. His heart ached for them because he understood their love and endurance, the circumstances of which kept them apart without losing their faith. In fact, as reported previously, he went to Avila with Maria and Anna Teresa and another sister to help them establish a second convent of the stricter order. He and Anna traveled later with Maria and Juan to many places to establish convents at a time when there were no roads. The going was rough. Very often they became tired, dirty and hungry.

Time and again Maria and Juan discussed their plight with Anna Teresa who loved them both very much. She followed their spiritual thesis and was their devoted helper and follower. She carried messages between the two, covered for them when they were in hiding and mislead the authorities who looked for them from time to time.



The Hour of Travail

Maria and Juan had been in hiding for over three years in the monastery securely hidden in the great cathedral at Segovia. They knew the danger they were in and took every step to remain in seclusion. They only went out at night, saw little sunlight. The authorities came time and again looking for them but, Father Nunez and Sister Anna always covered for them in every possible way. Both of our subjects knew the consequences of being caught. On at least two previous occasions they were arrested. On one occasion they were given the death sentence, but escaped from jail. They got away late at night, walking many miles to a small village and became nearly exhausted before they found safety. A second arrest placed them in cellars, where they were left to die in chains. This was standard punishment for so-called traitors. They were not attended, but in the end they were rescued.

One evening Juan went to the usual hiding place in the monastery to wait for Maria. She was delayed in getting there because Anna had warned her that the authorities were on a rampage that night. This time they succeeded in finding Juan and placed him under arrest. When Maria arrived at the rendezvous she learned of the arrest and was heartbroken, blaming herself because of her delay. The authorities continued to search for Maria but did not find her.

Juan was placed in chains at the jail to await a trial. He was afraid he would die. In due course he was transferred to Valladolid for trial. The tribunal was assembled and the court trial was held. There were charges and counter-charges; Juan did not have legal representation. The whole proceeding was a mockery and Juan was completely confused. He was charged with treason against the government and church and sentenced to prison in Seville.



In the meantime Juan learned that Maria had been apprehended and was awaiting trial. In short order her trial was held and she too was sentenced to prison in Seville. Both were sent to Seville about the same time. She was to remain for two years, he for fourteen months. Father Nunez and Sister Anna stayed with the monastery in Segovia to await the return of Maria and Juan, which was never to take place.

#### In Prison at Seville

Maria was delighted to know that she and Juan would be in prison together, hoping to see him, which was not to be. Likewise Juan was of the same mind, but destined for similar disappointment. After a short time, Maria became ill and asked for Anna to join her and be permitted to nurse her to good health. This took some doing but the authorities in due time relented and Anna was able to come to her. Anna was appalled at prison conditions and was sure that Maria would have died had she not been permitted to join her. Anna managed to find Juan and reported Maria's condition which was a worry to him that she might not recover.

Anna was furious at the Church for their narrow-minded attitude which had brought this blight in their lives. Since Seville was her native home, she did everything possible to have the sentences of Juan and Maria commuted, but entirely without success. The Church had too much affluence in the high places of power. At one time in prison, Maria's concern for her plight and that of Juan she almost renounced the Church. Her temptation was abated and she more and more turned to God. She was brave in the face of difficulties and dangers, pure in her motives. She became more lovely than ever and never lost her gentleness thereafter. As a result she was loved by everyone in the prison who really knew her. In the confines of her cell, she drew a picture of Juan while in this confinement. She drew it from memory so she could always have him at her side. It seemed to be a good likeness.



Juan was not well a large part of the time. He too became very discouraged and was filled with doubts as to the future. At times he did not know how he would keep alive, but his faith held to see him through. To cover his loneliness he wrote many letters. Father Nunez stated that he received a communication from Juan when he was ill and that the letter was not too coherent.

After Juan recovered he seriously pursued his poetry and his exceptional gift was to manifest itself later. As a result of his long confinement he was to leave prison as a major poet, a lyricist of the darker moods of the spirit; the title of one of his outcries became a theme song of his confusion, "The Dark Night of the Soul":

On a dark night,  
inflamed with love's desires,  
oh sweet happiness,  
I went forth unnoticed  
when my house was already asleep.

In the dark night Juan found the beginning of his mystical understanding, which drew him even closer to Maria, a reminder of the treks in the night when he and Maria Teresa found happiness long after the rest of the world was silent in the stillness of the night.

#### Arevalo, the Port of Call

Anna Teresa, knowing that Juan was soon to get his discharge from the prison and knowing that she would follow a few months later, suggested that Juan go to Arevalo and wait for her. This he did. Upon his discharge he was warned that he should bring his life in conformity with the Church and that his whereabouts would be under surveillance. It took Juan over four months to reach Arevalo which was more than 800 kilometers from Seville. While waiting he



entered into church responsibilities as the time dragged on. He was not sure Maria would make it to Arevalo. In another three months Maria arrived. In spite of the fact that she was ill she implored Juan to stay with her and take care of her needs in this hour of rehabilitation. This he did. When she became better they were conscious of the fact that they would be under surveillance so they chose to go to Alba de Tormes because it was a smaller town and good place to hide in.

#### Alba de Tormes

Both Maria and Juan knew Alba well since they had been there many times and had in mind the establishment of a new monastery while they could remain in hiding. Soon Anna Teresa joined them.

The existing church and convent had been established by Father Nunez. He had the help of Andres Mateas, a prominent local parishioner who was active in the church and very close to the brothers and sisters there. Help was enlisted from the townspeople in the construction of the monastery as Maria and Juan had planned. It was finished within a few months. Andres Mateas also assisted in the latter project.

Maria and Juan attempted to keep a low profile but they soon became a household word in Alba. As had always plagued them before, rumors went the rounds. Andres said that Maria and Juan were very discreet and as outsiders they were never sure what the relationship was. He said, "we had our opinions, however," but as far as he was concerned he wanted to see people happy and was very concerned about the narrow-mindedness of the Church.

#### Juan's Brother

While Juan was working on the monastery, he thought of his brothers whom he had not seen in many years. After much inquiring he was able to find his older brother, who was astonished that Juan had changed so much. The brother still



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invisioned Juan as he was as a child. The brother said that so much time had elapsed that he could only be guided by rumors about Juan. He said that the assaults within the Church were furious and that he had often wept silently upon hearing them. Juan did not say much at first; thereafter, they talked for many hours. Then Juan told him at least part of the story of his relationship with Maria. It was clear to Juan's brother that he was very much in love with her. The brother was shocked at the story and belatedly advised Juan to leave at once. Of course, this was postlude advice, much too late to be of any practical help. The precise advice that Juan had received many times before. With an embrace the two parted, never to see each other again.

#### The End of Time

As the new monastery was completed it became evident that Maria was becoming increasingly ill and she wanted to return to Avila at once. She had a basement room off the main corridor of the church where Juan and the others visited her but it soon became evident that she was too ill to return to Avila. She continued to show concern for Juan because he too was not in good health. After she felt that Juan was getting along reasonably well she began to realize that she could make a transition in death and that the end was imminent. She left this life full of faith and confidence that her visions were correct and that she had accomplished her mission. She was beautiful in death. She died September 29, 1582.

She was first buried under the corridor of the Church near the room in which she died. A controversy developed at once as to whether she should be buried at Alba or Avila. It was thought by the townspeople that her body could not be found under the church floor. Both Juan and Anna knew Maria did not want to die or be buried anywhere but Avila, where she had close ties and was the hub of all of her activities in behalf of the Carmelites.



### The Broken Vine

After Maria's death Juan was grief stricken. Something died in him also. It was as if one could not exist without the other. They were as one vine. He immediately went into seclusion and was not aware of the burial place of Maria. Anna, however, found the location and informed Juan. Both at once were joined by Father Nunez. In due course in the middle of the night, they entered the church, secured Maria's body and made the long trek back to Avila and re-buried her on the site of the convent of San Maria Teresa. This was in accordance with Maria's wishes.

However, the townspeople of Alba were furious. They organized a secret group to go to Avila and nine months later they stole the body and brought it back to Alba and buried her in the original church over the top of the altar, where she remains today. There are 13 statues over the top of the altar representing the 12 disciples and the Christ Jesus. It is said that when her tomb was opened at Avila her flesh was found uncorrupted and that a violet odor and a fragrant oil distilled from the tomb. Today commercialization has taken over the church at Alba which is completely at variance with everything that Maria and Juan stood for.

### The Last Days

After Maria's death Juan was a changed man. It took time for the Church and the world to discover his greatness. He always in the living was in the shadow of Maria. His literary prowess had lofty symbolism and his prose very often seemed obscure, just as his preachments indicating that one should find God with- in were not understood at the time and even to this day find little acceptance in the popular churches.

"To Spain mysticism is as natural as the olive tree, but here it avoids



both the mysterious excess and the delirious rapture of eastern mysticism. It is a practical, one might almost say realistic, method of attaining a realization of God. It requires no trauma, is far removed from catatonic trance and avoids special vocabularies and recondite ritual; it is a very special brand of "mysticism and the principal theological gift of Spain to the world at large. No better exemplars could be found than this curiously assorted pair of Avila; they were hard-headed realists when it came to the management of religious societies and self-disciplined intellects when it came to rationalizing and reporting their religious experiences. They insisted, however, upon the reality of their approach to God and defended it to the end."

Juan's lyrical verses are distinguished for their rapturous ecstasy and beauty of expression.

In Avila the Church of San Juan follows his name as do other edifices throughout the world.

As for Anna Teresa the Church of Anna Teresa in Avila is her glory representing one of the most beloved characters to follow in the footsteps of Maria and Juan.

Father Nunez Martinez can find solace in the Palace of Nunez in Avila. His greatness as the lifetime confessor for Maria and Juan was filled with compassion and understanding.

Broken by persecution Juan was sent to the monastery of Ubeda where he died in 1591. His Obras espirituales was published posthumously in 1618. He was beatified in 1674. Juan and Maria Teresa, these two children bathed in sunlight, founded sixteen convents and 14 monasteries in Spain and their work goes on in Spain and all over the world today. The atmosphere of their environment still prevails.



^Maria lived to be sixty-seven; Juan died at forty-nine, as if he felt it unprofitable to continue without the presence of his mentor. Together they bore the moves made against them by the Church and the persecutions initiated by monasteries and convents that did not want to be reformed. Each suffered severe discipline and even the threat of investigation by the Inquisition, but when they were dead, persons who knew them began to realize that in Teresa of Avila and Juan de Yepis, now known as Juan de la Cruz, this wall-girt town had produced two saints whose miracles stemmed from their close acquaintanceship with God. Teresa attained sainthood first in 1622, Juan in 1726, and they live today as the twin glories of Avila. In the fall of 1967 Pope Paul VI announced that henceforth Santa Teresa would be considered as one of the doctors of the Church. Prior to this, there had been no woman so honored," as James A Michener so succulently puts it all into focus.

The conditions of a solitary bird are five;  
The first, that it flies to the highest point;  
the second, that it does not suffer for  
company, not even of its own kind;  
the third, that it aims its beak to the skies;  
the fourth, that it does not have a definite  
color;  
the fifth, that it sings very softly.

--San Juan de la Cruz,  
Dichos de Luz y Amor



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## MARIA TERESA AND JUAN

## PART II

This episode started when one by the name of Tamud, who had been a close personal friend of Atka and Ra in Egypt, came back to tell us the story of another life that was to follow the Egyptian story which took place over 2,000 years ago. The second story as brought to us by Tamud took place in Spain approximately 500 years ago. The principal characters in the Spanish story are Maria Teresa and Juan. Tamud, who for the sake of brevity used the initials NT, introduced us to the main guide for our story who gave us the initials OT. In addition, there were other narrators namely: Juan's father, who used the initials AZ; and Juan's brother, who used the initials NZ. Father Nunez Martinez, the lifetime confessor to both Juan and Maria, used the initials NM. Sister Anna Teresa, the lifelong friend and peer to both Maria Teresa and Juan, was a nun and used the initials AT. Andres Mateas, a parishioner in Alba de Tormes, used the initials AM.

In the beginning Tamud said that the story could be related, while tragic in many ways, was also one in which many lessons were to be learned. He pointed out that the principal lessons were to be very carefully studied by both Juan and Maria, who are now in the living and associated in the business world in the year 1976. Tamud stated that Maria and Juan were in love in spirit, that this was the only way for them, indicating that their spiritual lives were so intertwined that the resulting love was one that transcended all worldly interpretation. He pointed out that the kind of love they had was because they were both on the same wavelength, so to speak. He also indicated that both of ~~us~~<sup>them</sup>, after having left Spain and crossed over to the other side, had definitely made up ~~our~~<sup>their</sup> minds when to reincarnate and when to come back to a world existence so that ~~their~~<sup>their</sup> association could be completed in this life to accomplish certain specified goals.

Tamud stated that the form of communication available to ~~us~~<sup>them</sup> from him was a form of radio transmission. He said that he was not on a higher plane which surrounds this globe but actually was a long way from ~~us~~<sup>him</sup> geographically. He said that he was in another planetary system which was much higher than even the 7th



plane of this planet.

Tamud also said that the story which I have put together now in Part I is one which ultimately will be told to many people. He said that the story will be of great significance and it meets with his approval to publish the story without revealing its origin. Those on the other side that are working with Tamud as a group said they were anxious for us to complete the story but realize that I had many pressing things that had to be accomplished and that they would be patient to the end.

At another point Tamud said that he had been attending many of my crisis meetings lately but had no comment to make at this time. At another point in his narrative Tamud said that he could not reveal the whole story at this time, but that there would be more forthcoming later. He did say that the work we are doing in all probability will have some identification with the work in which Judy Skutch is identified and that both of us now were not spiritually advanced to the point where additional information should be revealed. He concluded by saying that both of us would obtain knowledge through the psychic and that our awareness will be developed materially through the Spanish story.

#### Anna Teresa

Anna Teresa in the beginning said also that this was a tragic story -- a story of love and endurance, endurance of events and circumstances which kept Juan and Maria apart, yet neither one lost their faith. She said specifically that this is a lesson for both of us at the present time. She went on to say that we must not be weary for we have to have a lot of background before we can make further progress. She stated that ultimately they will give us a message that will clarify much of the material which has been given us to date. She re-emphasized that it would be as



experience to record and to produce this story, but in the end it would be a joyous occasion. She said she would like both of us to be joyous all of the time. In one instance she remarked, "You two are funny, you have the same sense of humor in this life as you did when you were back in Spain as Maria and Juan." She also stated that this story will reveal another aspect of our total personalities and that we would learn more about ourselves, which actually should help us a great deal at the present time. She too expressed the idea that this story could be written if the purpose and the source were not revealed.

She also wants us to remember that love is important to us now as a result of our past association. She emphasized the importance of this principal as being universal for all people and that this kind of love is that which will save the world -- all men will have to know the true meaning of love. Eventually they will have to learn that they will have to cooperate with each other for the good of the world. Anna Teresa reminded us that she was a nun at the temple at Luxor at the same time we were there. She said at that time we were wonderful people and that then we were married and had six children.

She concluded by saying that had it not been for the vows of the church we would have married in Spain the same as we did in Egypt and assured us that in the present she is near us all the time trying to be of the utmost help.

Father Nunez Martinez

He started by saying that this story would help us both to realize more the present purpose and goals we have in mind. He also said that the story had only been partially told heretofore and that the purpose of this was to more completely record the record. He stated that we should have no fear that this will alter our present line of thinking or make any drastic changes in our current lives. The message will only re-emphasize our present ideas which are a flareback to those we had in Avila.



At another time he said in another way the story is so long and involved we can't tell it to you all at once. He said there were many things they would like to say but were not permitted to do so at the present time. Putting it another way, he said what we are trying to do is to tell you something about your former life so that you will understand yourselves better right now. This is really how it works. He said that both of you have certain qualities that are a hangover from your previous lives, but of course circumstances have made us different personalities. He emphasized the fact that the lives we have chosen is the way we can become closer to the wholeness and perfection in this life. It was his feeling that we should do it all and accomplish the total purpose of our being here during this lifetime and finished by saying, "I hope you understand,"

He said always remember the human quality of people, particularly emphasizing that of Maria and Juan. He said that same characteristic was carried over to us in this lifetime -- "after all you are human too." Finally, he said that Avila has changed a great deal since we were last there. Many buildings have been relocated but that the community is certainly lovely as ever. He was impressed over the fact that the streets had been named, which was not the case in our previous time. He said we are here to help you in anyway possible, always close by.

#### Juan's Father

He started by saying that he was sorry that he had to leave me at such a young age. He pointed out that at <sup>Varenda</sup> ~~Durana~~ I went to school only part time and had to work at odd jobs the rest of the time. He pointed out that when he was a man in the living in Spain he was very skeptical in his lifetime and really was not prepared to die because he was afraid and most unhappy that he had to leave his family. After his death and found that he was on the other side, he said that he became very confused at first and went astray. He had to have lots of help to become accustomed to his new environment. There were many teachers on the other side that came to his aid because



he certainly did not want to be there and he was so remorseful about leaving his family. He said however later he got straightened out and became a very good teacher on that side.

He stated that when he was on the other side he was not aware of the hard times I was having in Spain. It was his feeling that both of us were highly developed now and are in this state because of our many past experiences. He said while we don't remember, they will help us to know better as time goes on what is best because of our past association and that it was necessary for us to go through this same process of development. He said we came back here to get ready to grow to the next plane wherein time <sup>is no more</sup> ~~is~~ He seemed to disagree somewhat with Father Nunez who said that we must make considerable progress during this lifetime in order to precipitate longevity on the other side. On the other hand, Juan's father seemed to believe we already had attained much of that advancement and were almost ready.

④ He stated that he had learned of many wagging tongues and rumors that went all about Spain as the result of the association of Maria and Juan. It was his opinion that our love was very, very necessary and that Maria was very good for Juan, regardless of the conflict it brought about and that he was very happy that it had happened. He said your mother Maria is here too and she of course was not aware of the problems at the time as ~~no~~one told her. He also said that she does not condemn us in any way. Mother Maria was very devout and he said that Juan took after his mother and that he, the father, was happy that I was such a good person, etc.

He said upon retrospect it was good for both of us that we <sup>had</sup> to endure such a long ordeal. A lot of it, he stated, was because Juan was so naive about worldly things that he did not realize the reprisals that could take place. He concluded by saying "it is nice that we have been able to talk today and are most happy to know that everything is fine with both of you."



Juan's Brother

He started by saying that he regretted so much that we were broken up and separated as a family. After all of us went to Alba to live with the uncle we were split up and for the most part, isolated thereafter. He said for many years he heard rumors about me but didn't have the slightest idea where I was and what I had done or where I was living. He said he thought about me often. He didn't even know whether I was alive. He went on to say that through the many years while he was on the other side and I subsequently came over, that we were never able to make contact there and that he had been looking for me ever since, both on that side and on this side. He is most happy now that he at last had found me. He expressed his regret that I died at such a young age and was so sorry that he never had seen me again with the exception of the one time when I told him the story about my association with Maria. He said at the time he couldn't understand the problem but that he would try to make up for that now because now he understood completely. He would always be standing by to help in any way that he can. He concluded by saying, "you are going to have many trials ahead -- have courage because you will come out okay."

Andres Mateas

He expressed the opinion that in those days the church was very narrow-minded and could not see things in a broad perspective as we tend to do in this life. He emphasized that we should always remember that point. He said "Keep this in mind because that was the precise way that things went in Alba and that we were severely criticized at the time." He said in Alba most people were inclined to criticize and see the worst in others and asked that we remember that lesson in this life. He said that would be most helpful. He indicated that all of this would be good development for the soul and that love is always the way to the source. In other words, you get there by being compatible. "The



way to knowledge is the way to the source. Do what you can to develop this in yourselves and you~~r~~ are accomplishing and doing that right now."

~~He wrote~~ He wrote *in this life, as a writer*

I should like to personally comment that when I was in Alba de Tormes, I looked across the Tormes River and then back to a church that looked very familiar. It was indicated actually by those on the other side that I had at one time attended that church. I also would like to remark that while I witnessed the room which had been restored where Maria died that considerable marble and carpeting had been added and of course there were relics and other artifacts neatly placed around the room. Later Anna Teresa said that all of that ridiculous junk that was added to her room was only "window dressing" and that actually Maria was living in a very austere place. Andres Mateas also agreed.

As a final line, it was stated quite clearly that in addition to the material which has been given us there is more to come including that on Alcazar.